

and a special Nation and our men and women who are serving us in Iraq are special to us, to all of us.

The article that I alluded to earlier and mentioned the name of Private Clausen, I would like to quote from other soldiers who are in Baghdad currently who are fighting, are in the combat, and their observations, and I would encourage my colleagues on both sides to listen to their words. They get it. They understand. They know what is happening on the ground. They know the reality of Iraq.

Lieutenant Antonio Hardy. These are his words:

"To be honest, it's going to be like this for a long time to come, no matter what we do. I think some people in America don't want to know about all this violence, about all the killings. The people back home are shielded from it. They get it sugar-coated."

Sergeant Herbert Gill:

"What is victory supposed to look like? Every time we turn around and go into a new area, there's somebody waiting to kill us. Once more raids start happening, they'll melt away. And then 2 or 3 months later, when we leave and we say it's a success, they'll come back."

Our troops get it.

I referred earlier to Private Zack Clausen. Let me repeat his words: "We can get into a firefight and empty our ammo, but it doesn't accomplish much. This is not our war—we're in the middle."

Listen to these voices. These are not the voices that come and appear before us in congressional hearings. These are our brothers, our children, our sons, our daughters that are serving every day in Baghdad. Let's listen to the troops.

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a profound debt of gratitude for our men and women serving in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Our brave soldiers are remarkable. They find themselves in a foreign land with regional conflicts that date back over a thousand years. However, they don't run and hide. They fight. They risk their lives helping to encourage and teach the Iraqis to take over their own destiny.

Our Nation's sons and daughters deserve nothing short of unconditional gratitude and support from their government and the American people. As long as I am in Congress, our soldiers will have an ally.

As a veteran, and a father, I will always fight to protect those who defend their country. I will fight for equipment and supplies. I will fight for their safety and protection. I will make sure they return home to their loved ones as quickly as possible. And I pledge they will NOT be forgotten once they return home.

But I will not support sending over 20,000 more young men and women into a fight without a plan to win and get them home. We cannot send more Americans into harm's way to instill a peace that the Iraqis are not willing to seek for themselves.

The solutions now are political not military. The Iraq Study Group urged the president to pursue a diplomatic solution alongside our military efforts.

But this president has decided to ignore the diplomatic side of the equation. This adminis-

tration has squandered their credibility by losing billions in reconstruction funds, failing to adequately equip our troops, and failing to develop a clear plan for reconstruction in Iraq.

It is time for the Iraqi people to stand up and for the United States to begin a phased redeployment to protect American interests and take our troops out of the direct line of fire.

In closing, this war has created a new generation of veterans with new disabilities not seen in past wars. Adding insult to injury, the president's recent budget proposal lacks adequate funding for our veterans returning home. Researching post-traumatic stress disorder, improving suicide prevention, and providing adequate funding for prosthetics are crucial budget needs to serve our new veterans.

On a recent trip to the Walter Reed Army Medical Center, I met with several of our wounded soldiers. I pledge to them—and to all our men and women in uniform—that your country will take care of you. And I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in fervent support of the brave men and women of our Armed Forces currently serving in Iraq. While American soldiers and Marines courageously risk their lives to confront a determined enemy in Iraq, the Democrat leadership in Congress offers this resolution. The spineless resolution under consideration would undermine our military commanders' plan for victory in this ongoing struggle.

This act of political posturing strikes me as inconsistent with pledges of support for our troops. We cannot simultaneously claim to support the troops while calling into question the validity of their mission. The question, Madam Speaker, quite simply, is this: to fund or not to fund. If this Congress intends to provide our service men and women with the funds they need to achieve their mission, and we must, it follows that funding ought to go hand-in-hand with resolute commitment in support of their current mission.

If not this plan, what plan? Before you answer that, recognize that Congress is not, and has never been, tasked with administering a war. No successful war in the history of mankind has ever been managed by the legislative branch of any government. And no credible alternative for victory in Iraq has emerged from any member of this institution.

I find it curious that not a single Senator opposed the confirmation of General Petraeus as Commanding General of our troops in Iraq. General Petraeus is the coauthor of the Army's new official counterinsurgency doctrine that this resolution seeks to undermine. Yet, only weeks later, this body seeks to pull the rug out from under General Petraeus through this resolution. Such political posturing is shameful, but unfortunately it is anything but petty, as the consequences could be deadly.

Members of Congress may be able to convince themselves of all sorts of contradictory positions and logical inconsistencies through double-speak, but our service members know weakness when they see it. Thank God our troops are men and women of resolve and integrity. If you want to endanger even more Americans in the field and usher in an American defeat in Iraq, the surest way to do so is to demonstrate a lack of commitment from this House, and therein embolden the enemies our troops are battling right now.

I don't believe that's what anybody in this body wants, so I urge my colleagues to con-

sider the consequences of support for this ill-conceived resolution. This is a time of war, one that is not of our choosing. Militant Islamists have been at war with America for decades, and they have grown more dangerous each year, as we tragically learned a little more than five years ago.

With overwhelming bipartisan determination, we voted to authorize military action in Iraq in 2002. Retreat from our current mission would communicate to Al Qaeda and jihadists around the world that the United States is fainthearted, and we could expect more horrific attacks on American soil than we saw on 9/11.

Let me be clear—I am troubled by the last year's increased level of violence in Iraq; we all are. But this resolution can only exacerbate the problem. Our service men and women deserve better from us. And we, Madam Speaker, regardless of party, are better than this.

May God bless our troops.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3 of House Resolution 157, further proceedings on the concurrent resolution will be postponed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS TO SUSPEND THE RULES

Mr. WELCH of Vermont (during consideration of H. Con. Res. 63) from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 110-13) on the resolution (H. Res. 161) providing for consideration of motions to suspend the rules, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. CRAMER (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for February 13, on account of a death in the family.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Member (at the request of Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. GINGREY, for 5 minutes, February 16.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Mrs. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a joint resolution of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.J. Res. 20. Joint resolution making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2007, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.